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A NEW BASIS NEEDED FOR THE MONROE DOCTRINE

BY GEORGE H. BLAKESLEE

A SINCERE and cordial friendship between the United States and the other American Republics is a relation earnestly desired by our statesmen. A bond commonly supposed to unite these sister States to our own already exists in the Monroe Doctrine, but grave doubt has arisen whether, in all parts of the hemisphere, this is now accomplishing the objects for which it was established. Certainly observers of conditions in South America believe that, in considering its usefulness, a sharp distinction should be made between the strong, stable nations of that continent and the revolution-tossed lands immediately south of us. They are convinced that our country should clearly understand the interpretation given this policy by South America, and should seriously consider whether, south of the equator, it is of any benefit to either the United States or the region protected by it, whether it promotes confidence and friendship, or arouses resentment and suspicion.

"We don't want any Papa," was the reply of a prominent Chilean when asked for the attitude of South America toward the Monroe Doctrine. This well expresses the feeling of the continent as a whole. The people believe that it makes Uncle Sam a stepfather over their Republics, who not only guards them from Europe, but watches their important acts and often tells them what they may and may not do; and this interference is universally resented.

The editor of the leading newspaper in Chile, Dr. Perez Canto, who is also an experienced diplomat, holds the same idea. "The Monroe Doctrine," he writes, "implies a moral subordination to the United States which is repulsive to the national feelings of the young Republics." A professor of one of the prominent universities said, in conver-

sation with the writer, that the Monroe Doctrine was generally interpreted by South Americans to imply a guardianship over their continent by the United States; he believed himself that it established the relation of elder brother, but, he added, if the elder brother keeps telling the younger what he must do, it naturally makes bad feeling between them. A member of the Peruvian Foreign Office remarked the past summer that the United States had better forget the Monroe Doctrine and treat the South American countries as equals; this would do most to make the relations between the two sections cordial. That people in Brazil resent the Monroe Doctrine as an insult is the testimony of a person closely connected with the Diplomatic Corps in that country:

It is the same as telling South America that it is not able to take care of itself. It is like a house-owner who comes to the home of another and publicly announces that he will protect it against robbers. He does not even have the excuse of being a neighbor, and naturally receives the indignant reply from the man whom he wishes to defend, that he is abundantly able to look out for his own property himself.

Only a few weeks ago the Valparaíso *Dia* asked, "Why does the United States arrogate the power of exercising tutelage over those countries whose inhabitants speak the Castilian tongue in the continent of South America?"

Such quotations as these are typical of the general feeling of the people.

But still more unfortunate is the conviction of many that the Monroe Doctrine threatens eventual conquest of their continent by the United States. That this view is widely held was stated again and again, in frank, confidential conversations with the writer, by representative men of the several Republics. A number of them added that the expression, "America for the Americans," which is supposed to paraphrase the Monroe Doctrine, is believed by a large proportion of the people of South America to mean "America for the United States." "Sixty per cent. of our educated people," said a Brazilian who knows North America well, "distrust the United States, and believe that the Monroe Doctrine is simply pre-empting territory which the United States wants, until it is fully ready to seize it." "The idea of the mass of the people," declared a leading civil engineer and university professor, "is that the United States will eventually try to conquer South America."

The head of one of the largest business houses stated that the Monroe Doctrine was popularly regarded as an evidence of the desire of the United States to annex all of the Southern continent, especially the weak countries on the West Coast. A former member of the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hon. A. Alvarez, wrote in 1910 that the Monroe Doctrine "is considered, upon occasions, to be a menace to the integrity and sovereignty of certain republics of this hemisphere." In Garcia-Calderon's recent and widely read work on Latin America this point of view is strikingly expressed; "The Monroe Doctrine," he says, "has undergone an essential transformation; it has passed successively from the defensive to intervention and thence to the offensive. . . . The United States seek to conquer new territories for their imperialist race." In both the press and public addresses it is common to find exhortations to the South American Republics urging them to unite against the growing danger of conquest from the North.

This fear that the Monroe Doctrine endangers their independence is held by a large proportion of the common people and by some individuals, although far from a majority, of the educated and governing set. Resentment against its spirit of patronage, however, is general in all classes; it exists in every one of the South American Republics, yet it varies in its intensity, probably being least noticeable in Brazil, and strongest in Chile. One should visit the latter country and attempt to discuss the Monroe Doctrine to appreciate how keenly the resentment is felt even among those most friendly to the United States. Men will avoid the subject; they will waive it aside as a disagreeable topic with the remark, "We trust that is a thing of the past"; or, when they express their real feelings, they speak as if they were discussing a painful, personal humiliation.

The question naturally arises, why do these South American people continually attack the Monroe Doctrine instead of expressing at least some degree of gratitude for the present protection which it gives them against the military powers of Europe? The answer is that they do not fear Europe, actively and consciously, but do fear the United States and each other. It guards them against a distant danger, but not against dangers which they keenly apprehend. For example, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay and Paraguay would give a great deal for a Monroe Doctrine which would

protect them from their stronger neighbors, Argentine, Chile and Brazil. Probably a majority of the South American States would appreciate a doctrine which would guarantee them from conquest by the United States; but it is too much to ask that they shall be enthusiastically thankful for a policy which benefited them a half-century ago, when to-day it is an affliction.

For the part played by the original Monroe Doctrine, in saving their continent in all probability from European conquest, the candid, thoughtful people are reasonably grateful. It should be remembered that all of the South American Republics indorsed it in the early decades after its announcement. In the last Pan American Congress, held in Buenos Aires in 1910, the South American delegations were willing to unite in a resolution which should express their appreciation of the protection which it has afforded them, and which should be sent to the Washington Government at the time of the celebration of the centennial of the independence of the South American Republics. It was impossible, however, to so phrase this resolution that it would indorse the original meaning of the Doctrine, and yet exclude the more recent interpretation by which they believe the United States arrogates the hegemony over the hemisphere.

If we are tempted to say that the South Americans have created an imaginary Monroe Doctrine, when they state that it proclaims a general suzerainty over them, if not an eventual conquest of their territory, we must at least acknowledge that they have reasons for this conviction. Our newspapers are continually giving it most fantastic interpretations. One morning this past summer many of them had large head-lines stating that Great Britain was to fortify the Bermuda Islands, which would very likely, they declared, be regarded by our Government as a violation of the Monroe Doctrine. If the fortification of its own American possessions by any nation is a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, then there is absolutely no limit to the suzerainty of the United States in North and South America.

The most recent text on International Law published in this country, when treating of our international policy, says, "A political primacy, similar in kind (to that exercised by the European Concert of Powers) though of a less positive character, is wielded by the United States on the American continent."

The calm assertion of guardianship over this hemisphere is seen by the South Americans not only in our newspapers and books, but even in the most official documents. It was Secretary of State Olney who wrote: "To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition." Surely South America needs no stronger evidence than this to prove the arrogance of the Monroe Doctrine.

The danger of conquest which it implies is inferred from a study of our United States history. It is a far cry to the Mexican War, but the educated men of South America know the character of it—about as cold-blooded a piece of conquest as modern history records—and frequently refer to it as a warning. They point out that this was followed in due season by the Spanish War, with its additional conquests and its Cuban protectorate; later, Panama was seized; and in our own time a constant intervention has been taking place in Central American affairs, especially in Nicaragua; while the independence of Mexico is threatened, and its virtual absorption frequently discussed in our press.

The Monroe Doctrine, as thus understood, by fostering resentment and suspicion, instead of friendship and confidence, is not only standing in the way of the development of a genuine Pan American spirit, the creation of which is probably the foremost aim of our Government's foreign policy, but is also preparing the South American Republics to unite against us, instead of with us. If the United States had intervened in Mexico this past year it would, at that time at least, have aroused intense opposition in some circles in South America. A Venezuelan said a few weeks ago, that if the United States should cross the Rio Grande, the Latin American countries would all wish to unite in Mexico's defense. This was clearly an exaggeration, but it shows where a real danger lies. The South Americans would resent intervention in Mexico principally because it would be carrying out this idea of continental suzerainty, which the United States might later apply to the countries farther south.

The so-called A. B. C. League (Argentine, Brazil and Chile) is an example of what might easily become a South American alliance against the United States. For the last three years the newspapers of the Southern Republics have been full of discussions regarding this League. There are

those in South America to-day who believe that some secret understanding exists between these three Powers and that its main purpose is for mutual protection against encroachments from the United States. This interpretation of the supposed A. B. C. League is undoubtedly incorrect, yet it shows clearly what might easily happen should our Government take any action in South America which seemed like an international intrusion.

It should be remembered that these three leading countries south of the equator, Argentine, Brazil and Chile, have a population of more than thirty million; have cities of over a million inhabitants each, which are more beautiful and probably better administered than those in the United States; and immense stretches of fertile land, in Argentine and southern Brazil, which are being rapidly filled up by a large European immigration. Two or three decades from now, when the population of Argentine and Brazil is doubled or trebled; when their military power is more efficiently organized and their navies increased—Argentine has now the two largest Dreadnoughts in the world—the United States will clearly be unable to enforce any continental suzerainty within their borders. It will be powerless to oppose an alliance between such a European Power as Germany and the A. B. C. League.

Many foreign students of international politics state definitely that before many years our country must give up the Monroe Doctrine so far as concerns the leading South American countries. In Elliot's recent *History of Chile*, we read:

In a few years' time the pretensions of the States to a sort of suzerainty of South America, according to the doctrine of Monroe, will be regarded with a certain amount of amusement in both Chile and the Argentine.

Oppenheim, an English International Law authority, says of the Monroe Doctrine:

This policy hampers the South American States, but with their growing strength it will gradually disappear. For, whenever some of these States become great Powers themselves, they will no longer submit to the political hegemony of the United States, and the Monroe Doctrine will have played its part.

That it harms the United States, as it is interpreted at present, is the nearly unanimous testimony of both North and South Americans with whom the writer discussed the

subject during a recent trip through the leading countries below the equator. But to the question what should be done to correct this false impression, so far as it is false, and, in any case, to create cordiality and confidence between the strong Republics of South America and the United States, there were various opinions. Some said: "Stop talking about the Monroe Doctrine. If the occasion should ever come to enforce it, do so; but in the mean time say nothing about it. The great South American Republics wish to be treated as equals, as the States of Europe are treated, and do not like to be constantly spoken of as occupying any particular relation to the United States."

This is good advice, but impracticable. The Monroe Doctrine has long been regarded as the foundation of our foreign policy, and to request our press and our public men to stop talking about it would be a waste of time. There are, also, certain English and German papers in South America which, in any case, would not let the subject drop, but would seize upon any chance expression in the United States, as they are now doing, to arouse South Americans to resentment. Not long ago an English newspaper in Chile quoted a harmless reference in one of President Taft's messages, and gave it the prominent heading, "A Warning to South America." The day before the Boston Chamber of Commerce delegation visited Buenos Aires, the *Standard* of that city, in a leading editorial, stated that probably the ultimate purpose of the visit was to prepare for the eventual annexation of South America by the United States.

Others insist that the Monroe Doctrine should be withdrawn, so far as the strong States of South America are concerned. They admit that it must still be enforced in Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and the northern coast countries of South America, on account of the nearness of these lands, the instability of their governments, and the necessity from a military standpoint of controlling the territory bordering the Caribbean Sea. But they maintain that whatever happens south of the equator does not affect the interests of the United States. Even should Germany seize a section of Southern Brazil, as some fear, and form it into a colony, this would be farther distant from every part of our country than Germany is itself at the present time. They claim further, that these strong South American States, Argentine, Brazil and Chile, are now

clearly beyond the tutelage stage; are in no apparent danger from European invasion; and even in case of attempted conquest would be able to protect themselves. To carry out this policy of withdrawal, some of them suggest that a Resolution be passed by Congress, stating that South America, with the exceptions just mentioned, no longer needs the protection of the Monroe Doctrine, but promising that if any of its Republics should ever be in national peril the United States could be relied upon as a real friend.

There are those, on the other hand, who believe that the best solution of the problem is a careful and official definition of the Doctrine, which would take out of it the sting of United States suzerainty. They recommend that either the President or Congress should issue a formal statement declaring that this policy of the United States warrants intervention only when absolutely necessary to prevent seizure of land on the continent by a non-American power; and, further, possibly, pledging the United States not to acquire any territory itself in South America.

Each of these courses has much to recommend it, but either would be extremely difficult to bring about. The American people regard the Monroe Doctrine as a national fetish, without any serious consideration, for the most part, of the bases upon which it rests to-day; and would undoubtedly prevent its withdrawal or serious modification. Again, there are many well-informed men who are convinced that the Monroe Doctrine is still needed in South America, that withdrawal of it would probably lead to the seizure of Southern Brazil by Germany, which would violate the interests of both the United States and South America by establishing a powerful military base in this hemisphere. In justification of this view it may be stated that some of the influential men of Brazil definitely fear this German occupation of the southern part of their Republic.

A further and final possibility lies in broadening and strengthening the present Monroe Doctrine by associating in its enforcement the States of the American continent, perhaps all of them, but at least those countries of South America which have strong, well-organized governments, such as Argentine, Chile and Brazil. This course was suggested many times both by United States residents in South America and by citizens of the various Southern Republics. Probably its foremost advocate is Dr. Oliveira Lima, so long the

Brazilian Ambassador at Washington. An admirer and firm friend of our country, he yet realizes keenly the hard feeling caused by the Monroe Doctrine in its present form. He pleads for "the equal assumption by all nations of the American continent of the duties and responsibility of the Monroe Doctrine, thus depriving this international formula of its exclusive and arrogant character," and banishing from it "all idea of protection and subordination."

The Monroe Doctrine, upon a Pan American basis, would be stronger than it is at present, for it would be supported by the public opinion as well as by the armies and navies of the rapidly growing nations of South America. It would, too, do away with the suspicion and dislike with which the Doctrine is now regarded, for it would then be the decree, not of a superior power, but of America as a whole, to which every State—or at least every State with a strong, stable government—had given its voluntary assent.

This Monroe Doctrine would not merely guard South America from European conquest; it would also insist upon reasonably stable governments and aim to prevent conditions which would invite European intervention, much as the United States forestalled complications in San Domingo by taking charge of that country's finances. It would be advisable further to make this new Pan American doctrine a practical guarantee of immunity from territorial conquest from every side. Just this form of an international agreement is earnestly desired by many in South America in order to protect the weaker States from their stronger neighbors, and all of them from the United States.

That the South American Republics would all join in a Pan American Monroe Doctrine, cannot be stated with positiveness, but there are many indications which make it seem likely. They are as anxious as is the United States to prevent European conquest anywhere on the continent; they have all recently expressed their readiness to indorse the Monroe Doctrine in its original form; and they have shown a wide-spread feeling in favor of general Pan American arbitration. One of the members of the Congress of Argentine, for example, very recently stated to the writer that there should be a Pan American arbitration committee to settle all South American international disputes. Further, he added, in case of attempted conquest, such as that of Bolivia by its more powerful neighbors, he would favor an

agreement between Argentine, the United States and Brazil to prevent it.

The Monroe Doctrine, based upon Pan America, would be much easier to enforce than is the sole fiat of the United States. This has already been demonstrated. Two years ago the United States, Argentine and Brazil united to prevent war on the West Coast, when it seemed ready to break out between Peru, on the one hand, and Ecuador, possibly aided by Chile, on the other. This joint intervention, for the three Powers really issued a command, was effective without resort to force and without arousing any general opposition. Such action by the United States alone would undoubtedly have raised a storm of protest.

This instance, as well as the earlier joint action of this country and Mexico—when the latter had a stable government—in keeping order in Central America, shows that the United States has already made a beginning of working in unison with Latin American States in enforcing the police power of the continent. It only remains to extend this occasional co-operation into a definitely formulated and generally accepted policy.

The new Monroe Doctrine would accomplish everything that the present Doctrine accomplishes, and much more. It would create a genuine Pan Americanism. At present there is nothing which consciously and sympathetically joins the United States and all Latin America and makes them a unit as against Europe. One of the most influential statesmen of Argentine says: "There is no Pan Americanism in South America; it exists only in Washington." This is largely true; the most striking fact about South America is that it resembles Europe rather than the United States. In language, culture, finance, commerce and sympathy it is more closely bound to Europe than to our own country; while we, on our part, are more closely bound to Europe in each of these respects than to South America. We cannot maintain, either, that as sister Republics of this hemisphere we are linked together by the common bond of democratic government, as opposed to the autocratic nations of monarchical Europe. This may have been true a century ago; it is not true to-day. Europe, as a whole, is more democratic than South America; while no single South American State approaches the real democracy of such countries as England and Switzerland.

There is, however, one possible strong bond. While Europe to-day is organized on the basis of aggressive war, Latin America and the United States are both organized primarily on the basis of peace. They have their armies and navies, to be sure, but these do not sap the strength of the continent, nor absorb the energies of the people, as in Europe. This likeness in national organization and ideal is the foundation upon which a genuine Pan Americanism may be built, one which will unite North and South America by both interest and sympathy. But the Monroe Doctrine in its present form will not do this; it will not check the tendency of the stronger States to enter upon a policy of military and naval expansion, for it gives them no protection against their neighbors and it presents the United States as a possible and dangerous enemy. Only by placing the Monroe Doctrine upon a Pan American basis will it guarantee each of the countries against conquest not only from Europe, but from the United States, and also, it is to be hoped, from its neighbors.

The power to execute this international agreement would be the united military strength of the continent, which need not exceed the present military and naval equipment of each country. This would be a sufficient police force to insist upon stable governments in any of the weak Latin American States which might be regarded as under the surveillance of the continent as a whole.

If all this can be accomplished; if the Monroe Doctrine can be broadened and strengthened; if, in consequence, South America, as it rapidly increases in population, riches, and power, can be saved from becoming a fortified camp, each of its frontiers bristling with bayonets, each of its governments spending its best energy in watching the military preparations of its neighbors, each of its peoples putting its increased wealth year after year into ever larger armies and ever new forms of rifle and cannon; if it can be saved from this curse of Europe and be allowed to grow great along lines of peace and industry; if in this respect America can be united against the policy of Europe—the result will not only be to the lasting benefit of both the United States and South America; it will be the most notable achievement of the new world.

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